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REMARKS

Applicants respectfully acknowledge the Examiner's review of the specification, claims, and drawings and, further, indication of allowable subject matter. The amendments and remarks presented herein are fully supported by the application as originally filed. No new matter has been entered. In light of the above amendments and following remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application.

STATUS OF THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1, 3-17, 19-38, 40-49, and 51-61 are pending in the application. Claims 2 and 50 have been cancelled herein. Claims 18 and 39 were previously cancelled. Claims 11-17, 28-38, 40-43, and 46-49 are allowed. Claims 3-5, 27, and 55-58 were objected to but were indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants have rewritten Claims 27 and 55 in independent form. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully urge that Claims 27 and 55 and their respective dependent claims are also now in allowable form.

With respect to Claims 3-5, Applicants have amended Claim 1 to incorporate the limitations of Claim 2 and, further, the limitations of each of the dependent Claims 3-5 in the alternative. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 1 and its dependent claims are now in allowable form.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112:

The Examiner rejects Claims 44-45 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Applicants have amended Claim 44 to depend from Claim 28, which is now believed to overcome the rejection by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, rejection be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102 and § 103:

The Examiner rejects Claims 1, 2, and 6-10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 6,218,934 to Regan.

The Examiner rejects Claims 1, 2, 6-9, 20, 21, and 26 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 5,671,996 to Bos et al.

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The Examiner rejects Claims 19, 22-25, and 50-54 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No. 6,412,973 to Bos et al. in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,180,212 to Single et al.

Applicants respectfully traverse. Notwithstanding, Applicants have amended Claim 1, as noted above to incorporate the limitations of allowable Claims 3-5 in the alternative. Claims 2, 6-10, 19-26, and 51-54 depend from Claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully urge that Claims 1, 2, 6-10, 19-26, and 51-54 are now allowable.

In addition, Claim 50 has been cancelled. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully urge that all claims are now in condition for allowance and solicit a Notice to that effect.

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT:

Applicants respectfully resubmit page 4 of 4 of the PTO-1449 form that was submitted on March 16, 2001, and request that the Examiner review and initial the uninitialed references and return the initialed page 4 to our offices.

Should the Examiner have any questions or comments, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (616) 975-5506.

Respectfully submitted,

RICK MOUSSEAU, BARRY W. HUTZEL,
 AND DARRYL P. DEWIND

By: Van Dyke, Gardner, Linn & Burkhardt, LLP

November 29, 2004
 Date

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